



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SWISS AND OTHER EUROPEAN SYSTEMS<sup>1</sup>

ERIC FISHER WOOD

*Author of The Note-book of An Attache and The Writing on The Wall*

**S**CARCELY a day passes that I am not called either a "militarist" or a "jingo". I do not consider myself to be either; I take pride in being a "pacifist". I have seen actual warfare, and no one who has ever looked with his own eyes upon the visage of war can ever be a "jingo".

Within the space of a single day I have seen something like 50,000 of my fellow-men lying dead and wounded upon the field of battle. I want peace for my country—as much peace as possible. Before the present war, I was a "pacifist" and an "anti-preparationist". Today I am a "pacifist" and "preparationist". I have yet to meet an American who has had the opportunity to see the present war, who is not a "preparationist" and a "pacifist".

As a matter of fact I think all Americans are "pacifists". We not only abhor the thought of war, but we have nothing to gain, and everything to lose, by war.

But our forefathers were not pacifists. Nor did they find 3,000 miles of ocean to be an impassible barrier. They crossed the ocean and by force deprived the American Indians of their possessions. Then, not content with that, they drove away the Dutch, then the Spanish, and the French; and finally they pushed the British out of the country. Now that we of today possess all this, we want peace; we are pacifists.

Today in America such terms as preparedness, military training, and war, have superseded the weather as popular subjects of conversation. An extraordinary amount of loose generalities are being indulged in where these topics are con-

<sup>1</sup> An address delivered at the afternoon meeting of the Academy of Political Science May 18, 1916.

cerned. Nothing has so vividly brought this home to me as the fact that during the past two days I have asked eleven educated men, all of them preparationists, if they knew or had in mind any specific definition either of war or military training. In each case I received a negative answer.

Let us consider the question: "What is the purpose of warfare"? The members of our General Staff write very concise English. In a little brown book called "Rules of Land Warfare", written for the General Staff by Colonel Edwin F. Glenn, we find the following definition:

"The purpose of warfare is to reduce the armed forces of the enemy to complete submission at the earliest possible moment by means of regulated violence."

I find such a definition or rule very illuminating. It helps me to better comprehend various incidents of world politics. It, for instance, completes my understanding of the Lusitania affair. The Germans didn't "play the game" of war according to rules. They did not "reduce the armed forces of the enemy"; they subjugated our unarmed citizens, the unarmed citizenry of a friendly country.

Let us consider the question: "What is the purpose of military training?" Concise definition proves illuminating. In our American infantry drill regulations, we find statements to the effect that preparedness in general and military training in particular have but one purpose in view: *The sole end of military training is to produce efficiency in battle.* It is an axiom, in all the armies of the world, that at least one year of training is necessary to fit the troops for the firing line. This is axiomatic, not only in the armies of Japan and Russia, of Germany and France, of Austria and Italy, but also in those of Great Britain and the United States.

I shall indulge in one illustration. Military experts agree that at the commencement of the present war the British territorial battalions were superior to our own militia regiments. To begin with, they attracted a better class of enlisted men, due principally to the fact that the British militiamen are not required to perform strike duty. They were better officered;

a considerable number of their leaders were retired or resigned regular army officers, who had had experience in actual war. They had certainly received the equivalent of more than four months' training. Nevertheless, in spite of the desperate need of reinforcements in Flanders, no territorial battalion was considered fit to withstand the test of fire until it had received eight months' additional training. The first territorial battalion to see service, a battalion of the London Scottish, did so only after it had spent eight additional months in a training camp. Troops which have received less than one year's training are worse than useless. Their addition to a weak army only tends to make that army weaker.

In what manner are the various nations of the earth accustomed to impart this year or more of training to their citizens? Countries such as Belgium, China, and the United States, have, of course, no system at all. The true military systems of the world may be divided roughly into two types or classes. The first class is composed of Switzerland and Australia, and for purposes of argument we will call this type the Swiss System. The second type, of which Germany, Russia and Japan are examples, we will call the monarchical type.

In the monarchical systems, the government takes over each able-bodied man for from one to three years, in order that he may be made into an efficient soldier. There is some difference of opinion as to whether the economic value, the personal efficiency, gained by these years of service, is a full equivalent in economic value received, for several years of time subtracted from the productive life of the individual, but it is worthy of note that most of the disapproval is voiced in countries which have never tried the monarchical system, and that in countries such as Germany, the army is known and approved as the poor's man's university.

Assume, however, for purposes of argument that these years taken from the life of a man and spent in a monarchical army are in reality a complete economic loss to him. In the light of this assumption, consider the democratic system of Switzerland. The Swiss system, and its counterpart in Australia,

are in strong contrast to the monarchical systems. In Australia, for example, the individual spends only about eight weeks in military service *after* he has reached his twenty-first year. This astonishing result is made possible because in Australia and in Switzerland every boy receives the equivalent of more than one year's military training as a part of his education. It serves as a vehicle of education, like mathematics or the languages. Military training teaches truthfulness, self-restraint, self-control, discipline, obedience. It makes men sound in mind and body. It teaches patriotism. It is the only vehicle in school education which teaches patriotism. Hence in the Swiss and Australian systems military training is not a loss to the individual, since it is an educational gain and does not conflict with the individual's productive years.

When the adoption of military training was under discussion in Australia, the women of the country violently opposed it and almost defeated its enactment into law. Within two short years, however, they had become its most ardent advocates, for even that brief time had been sufficient to bring out such a marvelous improvement in their sons as to demonstrate its great educational value.

We thus arrive at one very strong point of contrast between the democratic system of Switzerland and the monarchical systems. In the latter, the individual receives his necessary military training as part of his life work. In the former, he receives it as part of his education.

The Swiss system is organized for defense only, and no Swiss soldier may be sent out of his country on military duty unless he specifically volunteers for such foreign service, just as our soldiers who fought in Cuba were volunteers who expressed their willingness to serve their country on foreign soil. The Australians who fought so courageously at the Dardanelles were men who had specifically and willingly volunteered for foreign service.

For successful military aggression, the monarchical system is necessary. Aggressive monarchies, which, like those of Germany and Japan, frankly indorse a policy of military aggression, need great standing armies, waiting ready to be

hurled upon the prey at any opportune moment. They must be ever ready to rush into the enemy's country.

We thus arrive at a second great point of difference between the Swiss system and the monarchical system. The Swiss system is organized for defense only and would be incapable of offense except after a laborious reconstruction, which would in effect convert it into a monarchical system. The Swiss system is the expression of a nation whose ideals are ideals of peace, whose motto is not "Switzerland über Alles" but "Peace on earth, good will to men." I once saw it on the wall of a humble Swiss mountain home; and under it hung the army rifle, which is to be found in every Swiss household. The text upon the wall serves as a reminder of the religious principles of the father of that Swiss home, and as a greeting to all peacefully-minded men. The presence of the rifle in no way contradicted the text, and yet, for those to whom the text may be "but a scrap of paper", the meaning of the rifle was unmistakable.

The Swiss army has impressed me as the most democratic institution in the world. Every individual, be he a farmer's boy or the son of a banker, stands on the same footing. Every individual, no matter what his antecedents, must begin as a private in the ranks. Consequently every officer has at one time been a private. Neither birth, social position or wealth have any influence in the selection of officers. Officers are appointed solely on a basis of military merit.

Thus we perceive the third marked point of difference between the Swiss system and the monarchical system, for in Germany, Japan and Russia, and even in England, the armies are so extremely undemocratic that it is well nigh impossible for those not of high birth and possessed of social position to become officers of the army.

The Swiss system, while thoroughly adequate for defense, is one of the least expensive military systems in the world. It is inexpensive, not merely in that it exacts no long terms of service from its citizens, but also in that it requires a smaller expenditure of the national funds than any other military system in the world. The Swiss system costs less than nine million dollars a year to maintain in time of peace.

Here is its fourth point of contrast. Germany in money alone spends nearly four times as much per capita per year on her armed forces. The cost of the Swiss system is about \$1.60 per capita of population. Our inexecutive system costs us about \$2.40 per capita. Switzerland and Austria offer us for adoption a defense system which not only has been successful, but also is economical.

If the United States needs adequate preparedness it should adopt a system inspired by the Swiss system. It is not possible to copy slavishly any foreign system. It is impossible to transplant piece-meal to a new environment and climate a system which has been constructed for an entirely different environment and climate. The United States should adopt a system inspired by the Swiss system, and the United States might well adopt a spirit inspired by the Swiss spirit.

Some of our self-styled pacifist friends say that we do not need preparation, maintaining that when this war is over, the combatants will be too exhausted to think of attacking any other enemy. But this is not true. Armies are never so effective and nations are never politically so powerful as immediately following long wars. Practise makes perfect. Greece was never stronger than after Salamis and Marathon. Rome was never more powerful than after the Second Carthaginian war. When this war is over, many nations will be in excellent condition to attack us.

Three conditions must prevail before any nation will attack us: we must possess something which other nations need; there must be race antipathy, or there must be a dispute—a *casus belli*.

All three of these conditions will prevail at the end of the present hostilities. They even prevail at present. We possess many things which other nations need. We are the only opulent nation in the world today. In all history there is no single example of a nation which has been opulent and unprepared and escaped invasion.

And what of race antipathy? The weakness and vacillation which we have displayed in the last two years have made us frankly despised by all the virile nations of the world; and

to be despised is the most dangerous form of all race antipathies for the despised nation.

And what of disputes? We have commenced disputes with Germany, Austria, Great Britain and Japan. Those disputes have dragged along for more than a year. They will continue to drag along until the end of the present war. Then, and only then, when the hands of our antagonists are free, will they be settled.

The situation is exactly similar to one in our own history. In 1862, when our entire attention had to be given to the armies of the Confederacy, France ventured to invade Mexico in order to protect her citizens from attack by the irresponsible savages who at that time inhabited that territory. In 1865, however, she renounced Mexico and dreams of colonial empires and abandoned Maximilian to his fate, for even Napoleon III dared not oppose the veteran and disengaged army which marched down Pennsylvania Avenue on May 23, 1865. Our self-styled pacifists and anti-preparationists and mollycoddles in general, maintain that weakness and cowardice mean safety, and that preparedness means war. If preparedness means war, then learning to swim means drowning; surgeons are murderers; fire-insurance is arson; and Noah built the ark to bring the flood.

(636)